لا إله إلا الله محمد رسول الله

إن الدين عند الله الإسلام

THE REVIEW OF RELIGIONS

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Nabuwwat 1356—November 1977

EDITOR

M. G. AHMAD

THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT IN ISLAM

The Promised Messiah, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, was born in 1835 at Qadian, a village in India. In the eighties of the 19th century, he was called to the office of World Reformer to combat the false Religious philosophies and to explode the Christian theory of redemption based on the fiction of Christ's death on the Cross and to tell the Christians and Muslims to call off their hope for a second visit from Christ as he had been gathered to his forefathers and barred like all mortals from coming back to the world, and that he had come instead as the Promised Messiah.

The Promised Messiah initiated the Ahmadiyya Movement to revive faith in God, challenging rival churches to a spiritual contest to seek Divine sanction for the religion He favoured, through prayer and appeal to Him for guidance and arbitration in the matter, by means of His signs, to re-establish the glory of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, to expound and disseminate spiritual beauties and moral excellences of the teachings of the Holy Quran, to wean men from war-like tendencies and to educate world opinion in favour of renunciation of war as a means of settling disputes, to infuse hope, faith and courage in the drooping hearts of Muslims and all the depressed races and nations of the world, to warn the exploiters, slave-drivers and pedlars in sin against the evil consequences of their evil ways, to collect under one banner all the true followers of Islam and lovers of peace and to inculcate among them the spirit of tolerance, good will and selfless fellow-service and a feeling of true brotherhood.

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The Promised Messiah passed away in 1908 and was succeeded by his foremost votary and closest companion, Hazrat Hafiz Haji Hakim Maulvi Noor-ud-Din as Khalifa-tul Masih I. After his death in 1914, the Promised Son of the Promised Messiah, Hazrat Haji Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, was chosen as Khalifa-tul Masih II. During his 52-year long leadership, the Khalifa-tul Masih II organized a world-girdling chain of mosques and missions. On his death on November 8, 1965, the electoral college named with one accord, Sahibzada Hafiz Mirza Nasir Ahmad, Promised Messiah's grandson, Khalifa-tul Masih III.

For further information about the Movement, its activities, aims, objectives and literature, enquiries may be addressed to the nearest Ahmadiyya Mission or direct to :

(For inland correspondents)
Nazir Islah-o-Irshad,
Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya,
Rabwah, Pakistan.

(For foreign correspondents)
Secretary,
Ahmadiyya Muslim Foreign Mission
Tahrik-i-Jadid, Rabwah, Pakistan.

THE REVIEW OF RELIGIONS

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE CAUSE OF ISLAM

This is an organ of the Ahmadiyya Movement which represents true Islam. It deals with religious, ethical, social and economic questions, Islamic mysticism and current topics. It also provides Book Reviews.

It is open to all for discussing problems vital to the religious and spiritual welfare of man, but it does not give any assurance to publish all articles received by the Editor, nor does it accept responsibility for views expressed by contributors.

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The Review of Religions

RABWAH, PAKISTAN

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NOAH'S ARK*

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, The Promised Messiah.

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— II —

If the question is, what is this teaching? sincere and full acting on which can secure immunity from plague, the answer is as follows:

The Teaching

Let it be clearly understood that mere profession of *Baiat* is nothing. Profession must be backed by practice, and practice inspired by a heart full of sincere resolutions. Whoever, therefore, practises what I teach, he it is who enters my house

**Written and published 1902. In the original urdu (Kishti-i-Nuh) it has been printed and published many times over. It has also appeared in parts in English and other translations, especially the part called the 'Teachings', which summerises the requirements of faith and works for Ahmadi Muslims. Its writing synchronised with the appearance of the plague mentioned in ancient writings as a sign of the Second Coming of Messiah.*

The present translation is by Professor Qazi Muhammad Aslam.

about which promise of protection has been made in the revelation,

'I will protect everyone who lives in this house'.

That is, who live within the four walls of my house will enjoy immunity from the plague. But *my house* does not mean only the house of brick and mortar in which I live. It extends to those who live outside but follow me whole-heartedly—they belong to my spiritual house. To follow me is to have certain and unfailing faith that there is God above, All-powerful, All-sustaining, Creator of all and everything that there is. His attributes are eternal, abiding, unchanging. He is neither son nor father of anyone. He is above suffering, above mounting a cross and above dying on it. He is far, yet near, and near yet far. He is one but His manifestations are many. When man brings about a change in his condition, He becomes a new God for him. He manifests Himself to him in a new way. Change in man brings about a new awareness of God in man. God does not change, therefore, for He is unchanging, perfect from eternity. Changes in man—that is inclinations to do good, result in changed manifestations on the part of God. Improvement in man's condition is marked by a corresponding improvement in the expression of God's concern and power. Unusual use of His power takes place when unusual change takes place in the condition of man. It is then that great deeds are done and miracles take place. This is the God my followers must believe in. Have faith in Him, therefore, and hold Him above everythig: above your persons, your comforts, and above your relations with other persons. Show your love and loyalty to Him in all practical ways, not caring what others may say. Others do *not* hold Him above their relations and their possessions, but *you* must hold him above all things. So that *you* may be counted among *His Jamaat*. Signs of mercy God has shown always, from time immemorial. But you will not see any of His ways, unless you come close to Him and become completely identified with Him. Such that your wills become His wills and your desires become His desires. Your heads must

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remain bent at His doorstep—and in moments of success as well as failure. His will must prevail and prevail always. If you are able to do this you will see the God Whose face has remained hidden from the world for a long time. Will you, then—and how many of you will—show this can be done? How many of you will seek His pleasure? How many will be reconciled to His decrees and go forward on the path of duty, and even more so in moments of distress? This is the way to your goal. Spend all your strength to spread *Tawhid*—faith in the one Un-partnered God. Show mercy to all creatures of God. Harm not any of them by tongue or hand or by any other means. No injustice, in short, and no unfairness to anyone. Strive always for their good, their welfare. Show no pride to any of them, he may be your servant or your subordinate. Abuse not any of them even though they may abuse you. Be like the poor and the humble, the good-intentioned, the tender-hearted. So that you may become accepted. Many there are who wear the humble external but are like wolves at heart, harmless on surface, but serpent-like deep down. Remember, you cannot became accepted of God, unless you become one both externally and internally. Are you high-placed? Then be kind and not contemptuous towards those that are low placed. Are you learned? Then teach the ignorant, and do not humiliate them by your show of learning. Are you rich? Then serve the poor and show no pride, no superior airs. Fear to tread the ways which lead to destruction. Fear your God and choose your ways with care. Hold no creatures above your God. Turn to Him as your Lord and Friend, detached from everything else. Place not your heart in the world. You must belong only to Him and love only Him. For His sake you must abjure all sin, all vice. For, He is Holy, He is pure. Let every morn witness that you spent the night afore in fear of God, and let every evening witness that you spent the day, remaining clean and careful. The curses which the world heaps on you need not frighten you. They are like smoke, which sooner or later evaporates into thin

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air. They cannot turn your day into night. Fear, instead, the Curse of God which descends from heaven and destroys him on whom it descends, both here and hereafter. Pretences and poses will not serve you. For, the God Who is your God can see through the depths of your being. Can you deceive such a God? Be straight and clean and pure of heart, therefore, and unalloyed. The slightest darkness that remains within you will drive out the light you think you have. If there is pride or pretension or self-esteem or unwillingness of the slightest kind anywhere in you it can make you unacceptable in the sight of God. Do not think that a few good things achieved may be enough. God wants a revolution, full and deep and in all your being He wants you to accept even death, after which He promises to upraise you again. Be quick to end your quarrels. Forgive your brothers for whatever they may have done. He is a bad man who is not ready for reconciliation with his own brother. He will be cut asunder, because he is the cause of disunion. Shed your selfishnesses and give up all personal causes for complaints. Be humble like the guilty, though truth be on your side. For this is the way to divine forgiveness. Shun the fatness of selfish desires, the door you have to enter will not let a fat man pass. unfortunate the man who turns a deaf ear to the words of God, albeit formulated by me! You seek approval in the sight of God? Then behave to one another like real brothers, born of the same mother. The more to be respected is he who forgives more. Unfortunate is he, who is stubborn and hesitant. He is not of me. Fear the curse of God. For, God is Holy and jealous of His Honour. A sinner cannot enjoy closeness to Him, nor he who is proud, nor he who is unjust or dishonest. He who is unwilling to honour His name will fail to achieve closeness to Him. Those who drop on this world like dogs or ants or vultures and find satisfaction in this will fail to come close to Him. The impure of heart remain unaware of Him as do the evil-sighted. He who is afire for His sake will be saved from fire. He who weeps for Him will smile.

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He who turns away from the world to turn to Him will find Him. Befriend your God truthfully, enthusiastically. Then will He become your friend. Be merciful to those who are in your care, and to your subordinates and your wives and those who are poor. Thus will you have mercy shown to you by God. Become truly His that He may become yours. Dangers abound. The plague is one such danger. Hold fast and hold truly the hand of God, that He may keep these dangers away from you. Calamities do not come unless they are so willed by God. If you are wise, therefore, you will hold on to the root rather than the branch. It is not forbidden that you make use of natural means and methods. What is forbidden is that you put all your trust in them. Remember, the result is always in the hand of God. It is His will or wish which decides. He who has the necessary strength will find his highest station in trusting God.

One most important part of the teaching is that you will not treat the Quran as a thing abandoned. For, your very life depends on it. Those who honour the Quran will be honoured in heaven. Those who hold the Quran above every *Hadith*, every teaching, will be held in high esteem in heaven. On the surface of the earth, there is now no book worth the name but the Quran. And for the sons of Adam, there is no prophet, no *Rasul*, no *Shafi'i* (intercessor) but Muhammad Mustafa (on whom be peace and blessings of God). So, give your truest love to this prophet of high station and majesty. No one other than him is to be held higher than him in any way whatsoever. Thus will you be enrolled among those who have achieved their salvation. Remember salvation is not what you achieve hereafter. Rather it is what you begin to achieve here in this very life. Who are the saved ones? Only those who have faith and faith true, that God does really exist and that Muhammad (on whom be peace) is the intercessor between God and all His creatures. Under the sun today, there is no prophet equal to him, and no book equal to the Quran. No other prophet was chosen by God to live forever. Only the Holy Prophet. And how? Because the law he gave

us and the moral and spiritual example he left for us are such as to last till Doomsday. It was for the transmission of his spiritul influence that the Messiah promised of old has come. His coming was necessary so that the world should not come to an end, unless the Movement of Islam has reached its finale with the appearance of its Messiah. Same as the Mosaic Movement reached its finale with the appearance of its Messiah. The verse :

> Guide us Thou to the right path, the path of those who have been rewarded by Thee (1 : 6-7),

points cleary to this.

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Moses found favours which had been lost on the earlier centuries. And Hazrat Muhmmad (on whom be peace) found favours lost on the Mosaic Movement. The Movement of Muhammad is a successor of the Movement of Moses, but in grandeur a thousand times greater. So is the like of Jesus son of Mary, greater than the son of Mary. The promised like has appeared 1400 years after the Holy Prophet (on whom be peace and the blessings of God), same as Jesus, son of Mary, appeared 1400 years after Moses.*

And He has sent me with signs crystal clear numbering more than 10,000. Among the signs is the sign of the plague. Therefore, you who follow me with sincerity of heart, you who have chosen to obey me, putting to one side your own dispositions and desires, it is you whom my soul will commend to God's mercy, during these calamitous days. But you who count yourselves as members of my *Jamaat* you will not be counted thus in the sight of God, unless you begin to tread the paths of piety. First of all, therefore, learn to say your five daily prayers, in the presence and fear of God,

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* The Jews relying on their history all agree that Jesus appeard 1400 years after Moses. See books on Jewish history.

such that it should be evident you are face to face with your God at the time you are praying. Also observe the prescribed fasts with becoming willingness. Also those, from whom *Zakaat* is due should pay the *Zakaat* money willingly and those who must perform the *Hadjj* and nothing stands in their way, should perform the Hadjj. All religious duties you must perform willingly and with due care as to their details and requirements. All prohibitions you must abjure, disapprovingly. Remember and be certain that good works do not reach God if they are empty of the love and fear of God. Every good deed springs from this complex of love and fear called *Taqwa*. A deed rooted in *Taqwa* is a deed well performed, not a deed wasted. It is certain you will pass through tests and trials of various kinds, same as believers in the past had to pass through. So take care, lest you flounder and fail. The world can do you no harm if your account with God is clean and perfecet. If you suffer any loss, it will be by your own hands, not the hands of the enemies. If you lose all your worldly honour, you will have everlasting honour in heaven. Do not give up the effort therefore, under any suffering. To suffer is imperative. So is it to be disappointed and in many ways. Do not take to heart these sufferings, these disappointments. They are but trials designed by God, to test your constancy and your love of God. If you want angels in heaven to sing your praises, be ready to be beaten up and suffer and suffer cheerfully. Listen to filthy abuse and give thanks for it. Meet failure after failure but give not up your God, You are the last people—the last *Jama'at*—raised by God. Your actions should be worthy of your role. Let them be as perfect as they should be. If you are indolent you will find yourselves rejected as something foul. You will depart from this world disappointed and disgraced. Your departure will make no difference to the plans of God.

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Look ! It delights me to inform you that your God really exists. Men are His creatures, yet He elects out of

them, him who elects Him. He comes close to him who comes close to Him. He who honours Him, comes to be honoured by Him.

With hearts turned in the right direction, and with tongues, eyes and ears all clean, turn to God. Then may you hope to be accepted by Him.

For belief, what God desires of you is only this :

That God is one and Muhammad (on whom be peace) is His prophet and *Khatam-al-Anbiya* (seal of all prophets), the best and greatest of them all. No prophet after him, except one, who receives the mantle of *Baruz* - of perfect likeness- from him. The servant and the master are one, same as a branch and its root are one.

A servant who achieves complete identification with his master, and is pronounced a prophet by God, does not violate the seal of prophethood. When you see your face in a mirror you do not become two, you remain one - two only in appearance. The difference is the difference of the original and its image. That is how God wished the Promised Messiah to be. That is the secret of the saying of the Holy Prophet (on whom be peace) :

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"The Messiah to come will be entombed in my tomb". The Messiah is me—not different from me, that is to say. Take it for certain that Jesus son of Mary is dead and buried in Kashmir Srinagar, Khanyar Street*. God has confirmed the fact of his death in His Holy Book. If the *Aya* on the point has some other meaning, then where in the Quran do we have a proclamation of the death of Jesus son of Mary ? There *are* verses in the Holy Quran which proclaim his death. If

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* Christian scholars endorse this view. (See the book Supernatural Religion p. 524) For a detailed account see my book Tuhfa Golarviya p. 139).

they have some other meaning, then it would follow the fact of Jesus' death is not mentioned anywhere in the Quran. Was he not due to die sometime or another? God tells us about the death of our Holy Prophet, but nowhere does He tell us about the death of Jesus. What mystery this? If you think Jesus' death is proclaimed in the verse *

'When Thou madest me die, Thou were Thyself the watcher over them'. (5 : 118).

This *Aya* clearly admits that Jesus had died *before* Christians became corrupt. But if *Falamma tawaffaitini* means (as the Ulema say) *raised bodily alive to heaven*, then where in the Quran do we have a confirmation of his death? Especially as belief in the deathlessness happens to have destroyed the true faith of millions of people? Did God save him from death that people should begin to hold him equal to God, undoing their own pure faith? These compromises with pure monotheistic belief are not, therefore the invention of men. They are due to God Himself. God Himself hid the fact of Jesus' death to misguide people!

Remember clearly, that without Jesus' death there can be no death for the story wound round the cross. What then do you gain by holding Jesus alive, when it is also against the teaching of the Holy Quran? Let Jesus die, that true faith may live!

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The word of God confirms the fact of Jesus' death and in the night of *M'iraj* (spiritual journey) the Holy Prophet

* Incidentally the verse proves that Hazrat Issa will not return to earth again. Were he not due to return, his answer that he knows nothing of the corruption which set in, in Christian belief, would turn out to be false. If he returns to earth and spends 40 years here, meets crores of Christians who had taken him for God, and breaks the cross and converts Christians to Islam, he cannot put forward the excuse that he knew nothing of what happened to Christian beliefs after his death.

(on whom be peace) saw Jesus among the dead. Still you do not believe! What manner of believing is this? You hold the speculations of men above the word of God*! What manner of faith is this?

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And our Holy Prophet (on whom be peace) not only witnesses that he saw Jesus among the dead. But more. In his own death, the Holy Prophet demonstrated that all who had gone before had also died. Our opponents, therefore, do not reject the Quran only—they also reject the *Sunnah*. To die a natural death is part of the life-story of our Prophet. If Jesus escaped death, it detracts from the status of our Holy Prophet. You cannot be said to uphold the *Sunnah* or the Quran, unless you believe in the death of Jesus.

Remember, I do not deny the high station of Jesus as prophet: This, despite the fact that God has informed me that the Messiah of Muhammad is higher in station than the Messiah of Moses. I hold the Messiah son of Mary in great honour and esteem. For, spiritually, I am *Khatam al-Khulafa* (seal of successors) in Islam, just as Jesus was *Khatam al-Khulaafa* (seal of successors) in Israel. In the Mosaic line, Jesus was the Promised Messiah and in the line of Muhammad, I am the Promised Messiah. I hold him in honour, in whose name I have

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*The Holy Quran in one *Aya* points clearly to Kashmir: According to it Jesus and his mother after the episode of the cross went to Kashmir. It says:

'And we gave the two refuge on an elevated land of green valleys and gushing springs of clear water' (23:51). This is a picture of Kashmir. The Arabic *awa* points to *escpae* from a condition of dire suffering and pain. This is a reference to the cross. There was no other experience of suffering and pain in the life of Jesus. Not one, escape from which would have some meaning. From which it follows that God had designed that Jesus and his mother should find refuge over this elevated land after the suffering on the cross.

come. He is a mischievous liar who tells me I do not honour the Messiah son of Mary. I honour him and also his four brothers.* These five brothers were born of the same mother. I also regard as holy the two sisters. They also were born of Mary. And Mary is one who kept away from the marriage tie for a time. Only on the insistance of the elders and on the condition becoming obvious, did she agree. True, the vow of virginity was broken and the marriage was a bigamous marriage. For Carpenter Joseph had a first wife. But there is nothing wrong. These are the imperatives of the situation, a matter for compassion rather than for criticism.

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After saying all this I turn to you again and say, Don't imagine that this profession of *Bai'at* is enough. Lip profession is nothing. God has His eye on your hearts. And He deals with you accordingly. Heed, therefore I stand absolved from my obligation to teach, after I have told you that sin is poison, do not touch it. To disobey God is a vice, always avoid it. Pray and pray that you may have strength. Who prays but at the time of praying does not think God has power over all things, is not of my *Jama'at*. Who shuns not lying and treachery is not of my *Jama'at*. Who remains involved deep in the affairs of this world and thinks not ever of the Hereafter is not of my *Jama'at*. Who does not hold his faith above his worldly cares is not of my *Jama'at*. Who does not give up his evil habits and does not feel penitant about them—about drinking, gambling, staring at women using dishonest or corrupt methods, or transgressing on the rights of others-is not of my *Jama'at*. Who does not observe strictly the five daily prayers is not of my *Jama'at*. Who is not constant in praying to God and remembering Him always is not of my *Jama'at*. Who is not ready to give up bad company with its bad influence is not of my *Jama'at*. Who does not respect his parents, does not

*Jesus had four brother and two sisters, all real, born of Joseph and Mary. The names of the four brothers are Jehovah, Jacob, Sham'an and Yusus. And the sisters are Aasia and Lydiya (See The *Apostolic Records* by John Allen Giles, London 1886, pp. 159, 166).

obey them in everyday matters, not contrary to the Quran, who does not observe his duty to serve them and minister to their needs is not of my *Jama'at*. Who does not treat his wife and her relations with kindness and generosity is not of my *Jama'at*. Who refuses his neighours, help and kind offices even in small matters is not of my *Jama'at*. Who is not ready to forgive one who has wronged him but would continue to harbour ill-will against him, is not of my *Jama'at*. Every man who behaved dishonestly towards his wife, and every woman who is dishonest towards her husband is not of my *Jama'at*. Who, in any manner, breaks the compact he entered into, at the time of *Bai'at* is not of my *Jama'at*. Who does not really take me for the Promised Messiah and Promised Mahdi is not of my *Jama'at*. Who is not ready to obey me in all common matters is not of my *Jama'at*. Who keeps company with opponents of the *Jama'at* and is ready to say what they say, is not of my *Jama'at*. Every adulterer, transgressor, drunkard, murderer, burglar, gambler and everyone who indulges in corrupt practices, accepting bribes, stealing other proples goods, treating others harshly, lying or conspiring and every one who loves their company, every one who is quick to bring false accusations against his brothers and sisters, who does not repent for his evil deeds and does not shun bad companions, is not of my *Jama'at*. These are poisons, nothing less. Eat them if you will, you will not escape their mortal effects. Light and darkness cannot co-exist. He who is given to using crooked ways, is not straight with his God, cannot receive the blessings which are meant only for the pure of heart. Fortunate are them who are able to sweep their hearts clean, who throw out the impurities and enter into a loyal compact with their God. It's them whose lives will not be wasted and who will meet no dishonour. No, No. They belong to God and God belongs to them. They will be saved from every disaster. The enemy will be foolish who thinks of attacking or harming them. For, they are secure in the lap of God. God is their shield and their protector. Who are the believers in

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God? The answer is it is only those who believe thus. Foolish also is he, who shows great concern for sinners, the vicious and the mischievous. For, they will themselves meet their deserts. Ever since God created this Heaven and earth, it has never been the case that He should destroy and bring to nought His virtuous servants. No. On the other hand, He has always worked wonders on their behalf. He will show such wonders again. This God of ours is the Most Constant in His Friendship. Those who having placed their trust in God, are then constant in their trust for them appear His wondrous deeds. Worldly men wish to destory them, their enemies gnash their teeth at them but their God, their Friend, is always, at every time of danger, on their side. In every field He helps them to victory. How fortunate therefore, he who loses not his hold on the mantle of this God. It is this God we believe in. We found Him and we believed. He is the God of all mankind. It is this God Who has graced me with His Voice. And migty signs has He shown for me. He has sent me as the Promised Messiah. There is no other God. Neither in heaven nor on earth. He who does not believe in Him loses all spiritual happiness and purchases unhappiness instead. We have been graced by His word, bright as the sun. We have found Him—truly, He is the God of us all. There is no other. All-powerful, All-sustaining is He, our God. God of infinite powers is He Whom we have seen. There is nothing He cannot do. Sure, exceptions there are and these are laid down in His Book. Therefore, when you pray, pray not like those ignorant naturists, who have invented a supreme natural order of their own. The Book of God does not sanction this view. The naturists stand rejected. Their prayers will find no acceptance. They are blind, they cannot see. They are dead, not living. They confront God with a natural order of their own, and try to put limits on the limitless powers of God. They think He is not all-powerful. They will meet their deserts. But remember when *you* stand up in prayer, it is imperative you should think that your God has power over all things. You will then have

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your prayer accepted and see wonderful works of God, similar to those we have seen. What we witness to, is based on experience not on hearsay. He who thinks the natural order is supreme, how can he hope for the acceptance of his prayers? How dare he pray for the resolution of difficulties which he thinks are part of the natural order. But you, if you are fortunate enough, had better not think so. *Your* God is all-powerful. Look, how he supports the stars in space, with no columns or any such thing! How He created the heavens and the earths from mere nothing! You trust Him not and think He will find your prayer beyond His power* to grant. No, No. On the contrary, your untrusting nature will deprive you of His rewards. Our God is a God possessed of wonderful powers. But only they witness these powers who identify themselves with Him truly and sincerely. To those who keep at a distance, who do not have faith in His powers, who are not loyal and fully committed in their belief, He does not manifest His wonderful powers.

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Ill-starred is the man who still does not know that there

*There is nothing beyond the power of God. Only in His Book, He has laid down that in the matter of prayers and the granting of prayers, His mercy extends to all men of piety, but in the style of friends He hears and accepts a prayer even against His own decree, as indeed He has laid down Himself,

'Pray unto Me, I will answer you'. (40 : 61)

But sometimes He also rejects; this, to have His decree accepted. As He says:

'And We Will try you with fear and with hunger', (2 : 156).

Acceptance of fear leads to certainty of faith and increase of knowledge of the divine, and rejection of a prayer invites a man to reconcile himself to a divine decree. Man benefits both ways: he achieves faith through the acceptance of his prayer, and the quality of resignation through its rejection. Both are expressions of His love and both help the advance of man on the path of guidance.

is his God Who has power over all things. Our paradise is our God. All our higher pleasures we owe to our God. We have seen Him and found every kind of loveliness in Him. He is a treasure worth possessing. Even at the cost of one's life. He is a ruby worth purchasing even though one loses himself in the bargain. O ye losers! Run to this spring—it will quench your thirst. It is the spring of life which will ensure your safety. What can I do? With what drum shall I proclaim that I may be heard? What potion shall I use, that people may have their ears opened to hear what I say, If you are truly God's, then be certain, that God is yours. You will be asleep when God will keep watch for you. You will be off your guard when He will keep His eye upon your enemy and undo his plan to harm you. You do not know yet what great powers your God possesses. If you but knew this, you would have had no cause for worrying over your failures in the life of this world. One who has access to a treasure-have you ever seen him bemoan the loss of a copper? Have you heard him shriek and found him lose his hold on life, because of this? If you knew about the treasure that is God, if you knew that God is the supreme friend, ready to help at all times of need, you will not cry over the losses of this world. God is a lovely treasure, have a care for it. He is your Helper at every step. Without Him you are as nothing. Nothing are your plans and your resources. Do not imitate other people, people who put *all* their reliance on the resources of this world. As the snake lives on earth, just so these people live on their earthly resources. Like vultures and dogs who drop on carrion, they also drop on this dead world. Away and away have they moved from God. They began man-worship, ate swine flesh and drank wine like water. Relying over-much on earthly means, and refusing the strength which comes from God. They met their spiritual death. The soul which looks heaven-ward, abandoned them as a bird abandons its nest. They suffer from the leprosy of world-worship, and this has deprived them of their fine

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sensibilities. You must shun this leprosy and turn away from it. I forbid not a moderate concern with natural means and methods. What I forbid is their worship, so common in other people, which makes them forget all about God, and yet it is God to Whom we owe even our worldly resources. If you have a proper vision, You will perceive that only God exists, the rest is all as nothing. You cannot even open your hand nor close it except if God wills. A person spiritually dead will laugh at this. Better it would have been if he were dead before he could laugh !! Beware !!! Don't be carried away by other peoples and don't try to ape any of them. You may think they are advanced in worldly affairs. You may think their plans are grand, and you may wish to walk in their footsteps. But listen and pay heed. They know nothing about God and care not for Him, Who invites you all to Himself. And who is their God? A man with all his human weaknesses. No wonder, they were led into forgetfulness and sloth. I stop you not from a moderate use of the sources and skills of this world. Only, you should not follow them who give all their thought and attention to these things. It is but proper that you keep God in front of you always, whether it is affairs of this world that you have to deal with, matters pertaining to your faith. Your strengh and your solace, you should seek only from Him. And not outwardly only with your dry lips, as it were, but believing with the fullness of heart that all blessings come from God. You love truth? No, not until you make it a habit at the time of any undertaking to retire behind your door and bend before God and ask for His grace and help in the difficulty which confronts you. Then will the Holy Spirit come to your help. A way, unthought of and unexpected by you will appear before you. Have mercy on your souls. Don't behave like those who become complete strangers to God, relying on their own resources omitting to say, even the saving words *Insha Allah* ('if God wills'). May God open your eyes, that you may perceive that God is the beam

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(*Continued on page 310*)

Attributes of God - As proofs of God*

Abdul Malik Khan

The subject "Attributes of God—as proofs of God" is a very important subject, its understanding an essential requirement. For, God is the central concern, the soul of all religion.

The Islamic creed is summed up in the words :

لا اله الا الله

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'There is no god but the One Allah'.

It means God exists and there is no one worthy of our adoration, our worship but Him, Him Whom we call Allah. Such a being, we must know something about.

The Holy Quran is full of descriptions of God and of proofs of His existence. The proofs are of many different kinds. One kind of proof is based on the attributes of God. Proofs of God are proofs of His attributes. The attributes serve as evidence of His existence.

Knowledge of God also is knowledge of His attributes. God according to Islam is hidden from our view—veil after veil surrounds Him. To know Him, to reach the secret of His existence, His nature, is not easy for us humans. However, He Himself reveals Himself to us. His voice reaches us, which says, انا الموجود 'I AM',. And then we know. The attributes of God, like God Himself, are eternal, ever-lasting. They enter our experience through the example and influence of His holy men, His prophets. No wonder, therefore, belief in God and belief in His Prophets go together. The prophets reflect in their lives the attributes of God. Their lives afford us the required

*Speech delivered at the 1976 Annual General Gathering of Ahmadiyya Movement at Rabwah.

knowledge of divine attributes. But knowledge thus acquired is not enough. We have this knowledge confirmed by experience of wide world in which we live. The prophets bring us this experience. When knowledge and expereince converge, we have certainty of conviction. We become aware of God's existence. Therefore proof of God requires, proof of His attributes. Failure to prove His attributes is failure to prove His existence. That God reveals Himself through His attributes is something laid down as a basic truth by God Himself in His Holy Book. Says God :

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لا تدرکه الابصار و هو یدرک الابصار و هو اللطیف الخبیر

'Eyes reach Him not, but He reaches the eyes :
He is the Most Subtle, the Most Aware' (6 : 104).

Human senses - and human understanding - are incapable of contacting or understanding God. Therefore, He Himself contacts us (and let us experience Him), That human senses are incapable of reaching and contacting God, is pointed out in the accent on the attribute *al-Latif*, the Most Subtle. In Arabic *Latif* is anything without colour, without dimensions, without surface. The human eyes can observe only colours, only length and breadth and only surfaces. God is above all these—therefore, human senses cannot perceive Him, they cannot reach Him. That God Himself reaches human understanding is pointed out in the attribute *Al-Khabir*, the Most Aware. He is aware of the weaknesses, the limitations, the needs of human beings. He Himself grants His prophets knowledge of Himself. He reveals Himself to them. He enlightens human experience by special manifestations of His existence. The Holy Quran declares, therefore, that proofs of God, of His subtle, and to all appearances, secret existence, are to be found in the manifestations of His attributes. God's attributes then are witnesses of His existence.

God has a name—Allah

It is a distinction of Islam that it teaches that God

has a personal name. Other religions teach God's name, but they are names derived from one attribute or another. Allah is a name by itself. It is *Ism Jamid*—a primitive name or noun, noun in its own right, not compounded out of other words or derived from any of them. It applies only to God, a Being possessed of all the Most Perfect Attributes. God manifested His attributes, with their perfection and beauty to the Holy Prophet of Islam, the Seal of all Prophets, on whom be peace and the blessings of God. No wonder, He revealed His personal name also to him. Having declared :

هو الله الخالق البارى المصور له الاسماء الحسنىٰ

'He is Allah, the Creator, the Maker, the Fashioner. To Him belong all the Beautiful Names' (59 - 25).

God declared that all the Most Perfect Attributes we can think of, belong to Him, to the Being, the Person, called Allah.

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Two kinds of attributes

In Islam attributes of God are of two kinds: absolute and relative. Absolute attributes are absolute, intrinsic, independent. They manifest themelves whether there are creatures or not. Examples are His Oneness, His Uniqueness, His Knowledge, His Holiness. Relative attributes are attributes which do not come to expression unless there are creatures to serve as an occasion for their expression, their manifestation.

Attributes of God mentioned in the Holy Quran are very many. But the four attributes mentioned in the opening chapter, the Fatiha, viz. Rabb (Lord), Rahman (the Most Gracious), Rahim (the Most Merciful), Malik yaum al-Din (Master of the Day of Judgment), are basic, fundamental from which may be derived His other attributes. These four attributes constitute the Beauty and Power of the Divine Personality. They are evidence of His existence and presence. It is pertinent, therefore, to give some account of these four attributes, in an effort, as it were to unveil the Face of God. We have had evidence of these attri-

butes in the lives and experiences of the prophets. The prophets witness the existence of God.

The attribute Rabb al-Alamin (Lord of all the worlds)

The Holy Quran begins with the words:

الحمد لله رب العالمين

'Praise is for Allah, the Lord of the worlds' (1 : 2)

It is the first attribute mentioned. The attribute Rabb (imperfectly translated as Lord) means creator, nourisher, fashioner, in one. It means God not only creates, but arranges for the growth and development, to the fullest destiny and purpose, of whatever He creates. Naturally this takes place through stages. God is Creator—Designer. The creation is *Alamin* (worlds) plural of Alam (one world). *Alam* is an instrumental noun. It is a passive participle and points to one perfect, unique, designer, and maker. The form requires belief in such a unique being. When we say *Alamin*, therefore, we mean all things created, all things other than God, things which belong to the heavens or to the earth. They may be physical things or spiritual beings and they may be Here or Hereafter, animals, plants, minerals, everything. Man himself from the germ-plasm, through growth and maturation to death receives the grace of life and nourishment from the spring of Rabubiyat or divine creativity which encompasses the physical as well as the spiritual order.

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Divine creativity in the physical realm

On the universal grace of creativity which bestows itself on the physical world we have the Holy Quran speak to us thus:

الله الـذى جعل لكم الارض قراراً والسمـاء بنـاء

وصوركم فـاحسن صوركم و رزقكم من الطيبات

ذالكم الله ربكم فتبارك الله رب العالمين

'Allah is He Who has made for you the earth a resting place and the heaven a canopy, and has given you shapes and made your shapes perfect and has provided you with foods pure. Such indeed is Allah, your Lord. So blessed is Allah, the Lord of all Regions, all Beings' (40:65).

God's concern for us as our Lord—Creator—Nourisher is expressed in terms of four different parts of the Natural Order in which we live. There is first of all the earth, a resting place for us. There is secondly the heaven—the cosmic order—which contains and protects the earth. Thirdly, there is the bodily frame the excellent outer shapes in which our souls reside. Fourthly we have the many different kinds of food to eat, to nourish ourselves with. We need to ponder over these four kinds of blessings, the bounties of our Lord.

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The Earth

First let us ponder on the earth. A unique miracle this, on which we live and grow and prosper. Design within design and fully coordinated and controlled. The spectacle is inspiring and convincing and naturally productive of faith. At the back of it all there cannot but be a designer of power at work.

Not only foods and crops of kinds, we have on the earth's surface mountains and rivers, and natural routes. What amazing functions they all perform? The mountains have large stores of snow on their caps, also forests of trees and herbs. The rivers receive their water from melted snow and serve as a source of water for the countries through which they flow. The supply lasts throughout each year. Their water spreads through natural courses and the beneficiary is man. If the mountains had been just so many erected heights, not as rising ranges as they are, hill after hill, how could man have scaled them at all? If rivers had been just so many sheets of water, they could not have been of much use. Instead, they would have only covered up cultivable land and made the countryside impassable. Mountains and rivers are not just mountains and

rivers; they are designed and shaped and arranged, so as to be useful to man. Mountains spread out in different ways, and we have routes by which we can reach and climb them. Rivers have courses and we can walk along them as we like. They branch out the supply water to large tracts of land, making them live and green. The mountains serve in other ways besides. They have herbs and medicinal plants of infinite variety, also stores of wood and timber. The larger routes and highways connect countries with one another. Truly, does the Holy Quran describe the earth as a resting place for man. Its physical benefits and comforts alone are blessings impossible to measure.

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Heavens

Now turn to the heavens usually described as a canopy for the earth. The description could not be more true. The Heavens protect us in a thousand and one different ways. The hot blazing sun, the cool reflecting moon, the stars so bright and studded all over the sky are evidence of the presence of a designer of infinite power and wisdom. And more, they are a necessary condition of our own survival, therefore infinitely benign in their influence and in all sorts of ways. What is all this, but utter Grace Divine which has provided us with these blessings. We also have the alternation of night and day, and the coursing heavenly bodies with their countless benefits, all of which is proof of their concern for our well-being. If we had only day and no night, we would have no time for rest. Blood in our arteries would have flowed with pressure near to bursting point. If we had only night, and no day, we would have had no time, and not the conditions, to enable us to work for our living.

In short this alternation of day and night, the sun, moon, and stars hold countless benefits for us. These we owe to visible and invisible rays and radiations. Among these are what are called electromagnetic radiations. So scientists tell us. All these have properties and influences of their own. Our

knowledge of the composition of distant stars is on the increase. With the help of the spectroscope was are able to split complex rays of light received from distant stars into their constituent rays. This enables us to study the different kinds of minerals found in remote heavenly bodies. It is not the light only, from these bodies, which affects us but also the different kinds of minerals found in them. They affect the vital processes of our brains and nerves and, of course, the other organs. Moonlight has long been supposed to influence vital processes. So, it is relevant to our well-being. Both the sun and the moon have their effect. Physical ailments yield to the light of the sun. It has a tonic and health-promoting influence. Health resorts are places with lot of sunlight which is germ-killing, health-giving. We have seen vegetables grow with speed in the moonlight. Some flowers grow only during moonlit nights.These facts prove that the cosmic order (the sun, moon and stars) is concerned in our welfare, our physical growth, our health. Heavenly bodies assist us in our affairs.

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Human Body : Human shapes

Now let us turn to the human organism, the physical part of human beings, their external and internal shapes. There was a time when the human species did not exist. Then through miraculous transformations man became man. Each human child began to come to birth through impregnation, nourished in a mother's womb. The embryonic state, its needs and how they are fulfilled are evidences of the beneficent care lavished on us by God, the Best of Creators. The embryo full-grown is then born, an infant helpless but ready to grow. Its helplessness during infancy, is taken care of by the loving attention and concern of the parents. But potentiality for growth is all God-given. God-given are the conditions in which growth takes place. Foods which suit the period of infancy, sense - organs, eyes, ears, etc. muscles, bones, nerves, feet with

which to walk, hands with which to grasp and so on, The whole body - machine, its parts and the ways in which they work, separately and collectively, prove that there is a beneficent and almighty being responsible for them.

The story of our knowledge of the nature and working of the human body is the story of increasing insight into the uniquencess of this miracle called the human body. It is the handiwork of a designer of infinite knowleege and infinite power. Its miraculousness is as great as the power of its Creator. For illustratins you don't have to go far. Look at your hand, how it is made with its five fingers. The fingers are separted out, of varying lengths, each made of joints in just the shape and from required for grasping, handling, lifting, and so on. All the featuies of their structre, size, position seem made to this end. And not only this ; the hand with folded fingers performs other functions. There is no end to the use to which it may be put. So are other orangs, one and all, proof of the utter appropriateness of their structure, and their utility in a thousand different ways. They are just gifted to us. They are proof of the Great Giver, the Great Designer. Truly it has been said :

اے خدا احسان تو الدر شمار من ندانم با زبان صد هزار

جان و گوش و چشم و هوش و پاء و دست جمله از درهائے احسانت پر است

Thy bounties, O God, are limitless
A hundred thousand tongues will not avail,
Were they to try and count,
My life, ears and eyes—
My mind, hands and feet :
Are laden, one and all
With the pearls of Thy Grace.

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Foods, clean and tasty

The fourth proof of the Universal, Benign, Providence,

mentioned in the verse, is the endowment of wholesome, clean, tasty foods for all living creatures. How important food is for survival, we all know. All living things have their food committed to them by God. The earth below is endowed with the power to make things grow. The sky above sends down rain-water. Water is the source of all earthly life. However willing and able the earth may be to let things grow, it can do nothing of the sort without water coming down from heaven. Earth has the capability, but capability is one thing and turning capability into actuality is quite another. Nothing can grow out of the earth, unless water comes down from above. Nobody thinks the seed and the soil can do all the work. Water is the third requisite. True, water cannot do what soil and seed can. Everbody knows this. But everybody also knows that it is water which raises things from out of earth. Without water, the seed and the soil either fail entirely to produce anything or they fail to produce as much as they can. Water becomes the means of production. It gives us food-crops (cereals, pulses, vegetables and so on). It also gives us trees, fruit-trees of many different kinds, also trees yielding other things useful for physical and mental health and for brain work.

The question is wherefrom this wonderful, fourfold, plan for the upbringing and development of us creatures? The answer is God. No wonder, we have this declaration by God Himself:

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ذالكم الله ربكم - فتبارك الله رب العالمين

'Its Allah, yes Allah who has laid down this plan of universal providence.' (40 : 65).

It is the Lord of All Worlds to whom you owe these blessings. It's His Grace that reaches the humblest of His creatures. The truth is well-proclaimed thus :

صد منت تو هست ازین مشت خاک من

چانم رهین لطف عمیم تو هم تنم

Hundreds of graces hast Thou endowed
Upon this handful of dust mine
To Thy graces galore, is indebted
My soul and my body.

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So far—largely—you have had an account of how God works for the physical maintenance and advance of His creatures. Now let us turn to the spiritual part of the story. Says God about the guidance which He reveals through His prophets :

تنزيل من رب العالمين

'Revelations revealed by the Lord of the Worlds' (56 : 81)

The revealed guidance that prophets bring us to promote our moral and spiritual development comes from our Lord, the Universal Provider. He is the Lord of all the worlds, all lands, all peoples. No wonder, therefore, He has sent His prophets and teachers to all the nations of the world. Says God Himself:

ان من امة الا خلا فيها نذير

'Not a people but have had their warner' (35:25).

Universal Providence witnessed by human nature

The attribute *Rabb* (Universal Providence) is connected with the original unalterable nature of man. No wonder, God, in His Holy Book, has pointed to this original nature and held it up as proof of His universal concern. Says God:

الست بربكم قالوا بلى

'When thy Lord asked (the children of Adam), 'Am I not your Lord'? they said, 'Indeed Thou art our Lord'.' (7 : 173).

God, the Creator of human souls, as of everything else, at the very time of creation, endowed man with the disposition to love God, to be drawn by Him. God confirmed this compact with man, asking human souls—in the dramatic language of the Quran—'Am I not your Lord'? To which the souls replied with one

voice, 'Yes indeed Thou art our Lord'.

It is now for us to see whether this version is true to facts, whether human beings really show this natural disposition, as something springing from within them as part of their seed. If this turns out to be so, it will be proof that God really does exist, and that He is the Lord-Greator of human souls. God Himself points to the relevant facts:

حتّٰی اذا کنتم فی الفلك و جرین بهم بریح طیبة و فرحوا
بها جاءتها ریح عاصف و جاءهم الموج من کل مکان و ظنوا
انهم احیط بهم ، دعوالله مخلصین له الدین ، لئن انجیتنا
من هذه لنکونن من الشاکرین .

'Until when you are on board the ships and they sail with them with a fair breeze and they rejoice in it, then overtakes the ships a fierce wind and the waves come on them from every side and they think they are overwhelmed, then they call upon Allah in sincere submission to Him, saying, 'If Thou deliver us from this, we will surely be of the thankful'. (10 : 23)

The scene is set in the sea. The sailors rejoice so long as the breeze is favourable, mild. But as soon as it becomes voilent and the sailors find themselves surrounded by waves on all sides, they feel they can turn to no one but God. It is then they implore Him, saying save us this time, we promise to be grateful hereafter always.

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This is a just protrayal of human nature. Rejection of God lasts until man faces a threat to his life. Then he turns to God and this is his nature. It is this nature which God holds up as proof that He is the Lord to whom human souls turn in time of trouble. Prejudices perish. The facts of life become uncovered. Unhesitatingly they bend their heads at God's doorstep. They pray for His protection and their prayer

shoots from their hearts. This spontaneous prayer proves that deep down they are aware of the power and concern of God. If they have no such awareness, why does this prayer for God's protection issue so spontaneously, so naturally? Why this? We know from history how the Pharoah who rejected all signs shown by Moses, insisting it was not the God taught by Moses, but he himself his people's god, became surrounded by waves on all sides, as the tide rushed back on the land over which Moses had walked dry-shod before. It was then he believed and declared, 'I believe indeed in the God of Israel'.

The drowning Pharoah had found no new argument to believe in God. It was the voice of God-given human nature which spoke out. Why it did not speak until then, was because it had become suppressed by Pharaoh's pride, by his delusions about himself. When the calamity stared him in the face, the delusions disappeared. The voice of nature spoke out. The same voice which had been implanted in human nature at the time of its creation.

Human nature, then is an important witness. It has the awareness of God, of His Power and His Love implanted in it. This natnral awareness of God on the part of man is proof of God's existence. How beautifully has the Promised Messiah brought this out in his verse :

تو نے خود روحوں پر اپنے ہاتھ سے چھڑکا نمک

اس سے ہے شور محبت عاشقان زار کا

Thine own hand hath sprinkled
O'er human souls this salt of love -
Why wonder, if their love-agonies
Rise aloud to the skies !

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Human emotions, aspirations

The universal providence of God—His concern for all His creatures—is also proved by our natural emotions and aspira-

tions. We read in the Holy Book :

و الى ربك المنتهىٰ

'And unto thy Lord - God is the limit, the final end'. (53 : 43)

There is a reference here to human motives and aspirations. We human beings are born with certain natural dispositions, all of which we are able to satisfy in different degrees, in different ways. Our world is so made, so provided. Outstanding example is the instinct for survival, our own survival and survival of our race. Accordingly, our Lord creates us in pairs, man and woman. The pairs perpetuate the race.

The disposition—chosen here for special reference—is the disposition to pursue the path of progress endlessly. This disposition marks human beings everywhere, of every race, every colour, every country. Our world would be an imperfect world, if we did not have the conditions which make the satisfaction of this disposition possible. But our world, that is our opportunities, our means, are limited. Having achieved what we can within our limits, are we ready to stop? No, we want to go on to something still further. We seek other and still other opprtunities, other ends, world beyond world. This aspiration requires something the limits of which ever elude us. It requires a being of infinite dimensions, of infinite attributes. Such a being can only be God, a being of infinite attributes. Truly, therefore, says the Holy Quran:

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و الى ربك المنتهىٰ

'and unto thy Lord is the limit, the end' (53 : 43)

Seek and find your God. When you have found Him, you will have found an end. Closeness to this you will continue to achieve for ever and ever. But supposing you fail to find God during your life Here, then, in the Hereafter, you will be in

the care of Divine Providence. You will be treated us a soul that has gone sick. When restored to spiritual health, to a proper awareness of you Lord God, you will begin to tread the unending path of nearness to God. This is the Islamic God and this conception of God satisfies our aspiration for uneding progress. If you do'nt accept the Islamic conception, then it is up to you to tell us how this aspiration of unending progress implanted in man can find its satisfaction.

(To be continued)

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(*Continued from page* 296)

on which rest your plans and projects. If the beam collapses will the crosspieces stay behind? No. No. They will drop down at once and may be their dropping down will result in killing or injuring quite a few. So also are your devices of little avail without the help of God. If you seek not His Help and make not a habit of turning to Him always for strength and success, you will not succeed. Your end will be a pitiful end.

(To be continued)

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